

SECRET

BERLIN

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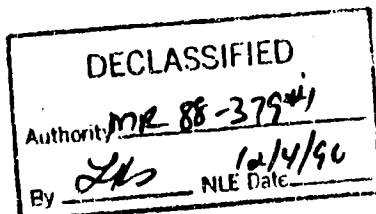
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FOR GEN. NORSTAD; GEN. LEMNITZER SENDS.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE IS TO LET YOU KNOW THAT FOR SEVERAL MONTHS WE HAVE BEEN WAGING A LOSING BATTLE WITH THE WHITE HOUSE OVER THE QUESTION OF HANDLING MESSAGES TO BERLIN. THEY HAVE COMPLAINED THAT THERE IS SOMETIMES A CONSIDERABLE TIME LAG BETWEEN THE RECEIPT BY CLAY OR LIGHTNER OF MESSAGES SENT VIA STATE COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS, AND THE RECEIPT BY WATSON OF PARALLEL ACTION MESSAGES SENT THROUGH MILITARY CHANNELS.

2. WE HAVE EXPLAINED OVER AND OVER AGAIN THE MILITARY SYSTEM OF HANDLING COMMUNICATIONS TOGETHER WITH THE REASONS FOR FOLLOWING COMMAND CHANNELS AND THAT IT TAKES LONGER TO DRAFT A CAREFULLY WORDED OPERATIONAL MESSAGE TO IMPLEMENT A DECISION THAN TO MERELY GIVE GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE GIST OF A DECISION. NEVERTHELESS, THEY INSIST THAT AN EXCEPTION BE MADE IN THE CASE OF BERLIN.

More



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3. WE HAVE THEREFORE RELUCTANTLY AGREED THAT ALL ACTION MESSAGES HAVING TO DO WITH BERLIN WHICH ARE DISPATCHED TO YOU, AND WHICH RELATE TO SUBJECTS ON WHICH STATE OR THE WHITE HOUSE MIGHT BE SENDING MESSAGES TO THEIR REPRESENTATIVES IN BERLIN, WILL BE REPEATED FOR INFORMATION TO BOTH CLARK AND WATSON.

4. WHILE I AM NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THIS DEPARTURE FROM OUR TRIED AND PROVEN MILITARY COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURES, I HOPE THAT IT WILL NOT CAUSE YOU ANY DIFFICULTY. IF IT SHOULD, PLEASE LET ME KNOW THE CIRCUMSTANCES SO THAT I CAN USE THE INFORMATION TO REOPEN THE QUESTION AND TO SUPPORT AN ARGUMENT FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION.

5. HAPPY NEW YEAR.

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